

Forever Maryland Foundation

Conservation Program & Policy Director

Position Description

Background

Forever Maryland Foundation is looking for a passionate and engaging conservation professional to serve as a member of the organization's senior leadership team as Forever Maryland develops, prioritizes, and executes its initial conservation programs and services, education and outreach initiatives, public policy positions, and advocacy roles. The ideal candidate will be excited to lead an effort to galvanize land trusts, public sector agencies, non-profit organizations, volunteers, and landowners as partners to conserve and manage natural resources in a populous – but ecologically diverse – state, and inspire the general public to embrace the role that land conservation plays in creating an optimal place to live, work, and raise a family.

The Conservation Program & Policy Director will be an integral part of a dynamic, innovative new statewide, non-profit organization that was established in 2018 to bring a new focus and energy to land conservation efforts in Maryland. Forever Maryland intends to establish a new statewide land conservation ethic and inculcate a passion for land stewardship among all Marylanders.

Working closely with conservation-focused entities in the public, private, and voluntary sectors, Forever Maryland is positioned as the only nongovernmental Maryland-specific statewide organization dedicated to mobilizing private philanthropic support and public sector resources to advance land conservation priorities in Maryland.

Forever Maryland's business plan introduces innovative strategies to engage Maryland's residents and visitors in the land conservation movement. Its initial programs and initiatives reflect Forever Maryland's commitment to assisting landowners and communities to preserve, protect, and promote Maryland's natural resources in a manner that strengthens Maryland's land trust sector and increases public participation in and awareness of the benefits of healthy landscapes and historically vital lands and natural resources.

This position will work closely with Forever Maryland's President and volunteer leadership to advance the organization's mission, vision, and objectives. The strategic imperative is to position Forever Maryland at the

forefront of a next generation strategy for the land conservation movement and create a world class operation in program development and administration, advocacy, and public policy leadership.

Primary Roles & Responsibilities

- To support the President's work with the Maryland Environmental Trust and local land trusts; and, to serve as the primary liaison to the state's regional conservation partnerships, with a focus on matters involving land conservation, stewardship, and other types of operational assistance.
- To work collaboratively with Forever Maryland's staff, volunteer leaders, and partner organizations to promote conservation and stewardship initiatives and position Forever Maryland as an essential partner with land trusts, regional conservation partnerships, other conservation-focused organizations, state and federal agencies, and local communities in working together to build a sustainable future for Maryland.
- To connect with the growing corps of professionals in Maryland, throughout the region and across the country who are engaged in emerging, innovative strategies, technologies, and initiatives to inspire and support land trusts, farmers and other private landowners.
- To engage in and promote sound practices designed to protect the land, water, and air; respond to environmental challenges; establish best practices and introduce innovations in conservation; and, achieve economic and social benefits derived from well-managed natural resources, especially farmland.
- To oversee existing programs, services, education and outreach efforts, and advocacy and public policy initiatives; and, develop new endeavors that –
 - Advance regional conservation partnerships; and,
 - Establish networks of landowners, partners, and volunteers engaged in the stewardship of private and public lands.
- To build and maintain relationships with landowners, public sector agencies (federal, state, local), agricultural service providers, conservation leaders and others to develop and implement strategies to promote optimal conservation practices in urban settings, on farmlands, and in rural areas of Maryland, including:
 - To develop innovative and engaging educational materials and programs for farmers, landowners, students, and the general public.
 - To engage with and support local land trusts.
 - To foster partnerships and collaborations.
 - To collaborate with communications staff in media outreach initiatives to feature and spotlight new innovations and impactful land conservation efforts throughout the state.

- To develop (long-term) creative ways to introduce fee-for-service initiatives and other revenue generating conservation projects, easement programs, and stewardship activities.
- To enlist and supervise volunteers engaged in land conservation efforts, whether sponsored by Forever Maryland, local land trusts, or other partners.

Initial Projects & Priorities

- To provide primary staff leadership for the planning and operation of the Annual Maryland Land Conservation Conference (and, as appropriate, its ancillary Webinar Series and Workshops); including the facilitation of a collaborative planning process that brings together a statewide team of land conservation leaders and the execution of all aspects of the conference including but not limited to its curriculum, content, keynote presenters, workshop leaders, and other logistics.
- To contribute to Forever Maryland's development of public policy positions and advocacy strategies and platforms to build broad-based capacity-building within the land conservation movement.
- To guide Forever Maryland's discussions and action regarding its public policy agenda and initiatives in government/legislative matters.
- To lead and advance the Regional Conservation Partnerships that are forming in Western and Southern Maryland, working collaboratively with partner organizations as appropriate.
- To advance riparian forest buffer implementation in support of restoration and maintenance efforts in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The objective will be to protect additional acres of riparian forest buffers, which, in turn, will help improve ecological function and water quality within the Chesapeake Bay. This project also will result in better long-term maintenance of new and existing riparian buffers.
- To serve as a member of the appropriate boards, committees, council, and other entities that offer opportunities to advance and support Forever Maryland's programs and initiatives, including but not limited to the Maryland Environmental Trust's Land Trust Advisory Committee, when Forever Maryland's President is unable to attend these meetings.

Experience and Other Requirements

- Must embrace the mission of the Forever Maryland Foundation and land conservation in Maryland.
- Have knowledge and experience in program design, development, implementation, and administration. Experience with major statewide or regional programs & services is a plus.
- Possess a strong entrepreneurial and business acumen.

- Possess the interpersonal and leadership skills to work with staff and volunteers as well as the public, government officials, conservation partners and community members.
- **Excellent** oral and **written communications skills**.
- Must be a self-starter and goal-driven individual capable of initiating and executing an array of program, services, and projects.
- Well-organized, detail-oriented, capable of overseeing multiple concurrent priorities and projects.
- Display a positive and empathetic attitude.
- Demonstrate presence, self-confidence, common sense, listening skills.
- Have knowledge and experience working with database management systems.
- Required: Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. A Plus: Advanced degree.
- Required: **At least five years (minimum) experience** in program administration in the public or voluntary sector, with a track record of success in achieving goals and creating impact via the administration/delivery of programs and services.

Working Environment and Physical Demands

- Work will be performed primarily in a virtual office environment. Primary equipment will be a computer, telephone, and other office equipment.
- Travel mostly within the state of Maryland.
- Occasional work in setting-up, staffing, and breaking down special events.

Salary and Benefits

Range is \$60,000 - \$75,000, based on experience and other qualifications. A competitive benefits package will be provided, including health insurance, long-term disability, group life insurance, retirement matching program, dental, and vision.

To Apply

You are invited to send by e-mail a cover letter, CV or resume, and salary expectations to ted@ForeverMaryland.org by October 23, 2020.

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